

## **Parks & Recreation Board Special Meeting Minutes**

The Parks and Recreation Board of the City of Mesa met in a special session at the Irving Elementary School at 3220 E Pueblo Avenue, Mesa, on June 9, 2010.

### Members Present:

Milt Fort  
Don Goodrum  
David Martinez  
Matt Shaffer  
Michelle Udall  
Ron Wills  
Marilyn Wilson  
Mark Yarbrough

### Staff Present:

Dawn Bies  
Susan Frabotta  
Marc Heirshberg  
Mike Holste  
Robert Howerton  
Andrea Moore

### Members Absent:

Connie Gullatt-Whiteman, excused  
Steve Ikeda, excused

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by David Martinez, Chair.

### **Welcome and introductions**

Mr. Martinez welcomed the Board members, staff and citizens present.

### **Discuss and take action on recommendation for designating off-leash dog area at Countryside Park**

Marc Heirshberg told the Board that staff understands there is a lack of dog parks in the city and that staff had identified a location to help meet an immediate need. He asked Andrea Moore to give further information to the Board.

Ms. Moore told the Board that due to other project delays staff had some funding to start putting together a dog park in this fiscal year. Considering the discussion around the 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Harris basin, staff tried to find a location relatively close to there that would be suitable for a dog park. There is a location in Countryside Park with land in a corner of the park that is unused. Two houses previously located in that area were demolished a few years ago. Staff had come to the Board previously about putting a dog park in that location with sponsorship funds through the Foundation for Mesa Parks and Recreation. Sponsorship funds fell through and a dog park was never implemented in that spot.

The location is appropriate in terms of parking availability; the location can support a dog park with the other activities that take place at the park. In this case, there is a retention basin that would be a suitable spot to start a dog park. The area is just over two acres. While there is not enough funding available at this time to develop the entire area, if acceptable to the neighborhood and the Board, minimal amenities could be added now to build a dog park.

An aerial picture of the location was shown to the Board. Ms. Moore said there are approximately 1.2 acres of total turf area, for both a timid and active dog area. The number of amenities would be limited to an entry walkway, benches, garbage cans, and a drinking fountain.

Staff notified neighbors with a view of that portion of the park from their house, as well as regular users of the park; approximately 70 notices were sent out. One resident contacted staff expressing concerns about cleaning the area on a regular basis and about odors; one resident attended the meeting. Staff will continue to encourage residents to pick up after their dogs; doggie bags, garbage cans and signs will be posted. In addition, there are landscaping crews there on a daily basis and this area will be incorporated to do a general clean up as they go through the park. There won't be any lighting, shade or agility equipment; it will be a basic turf area.

Mr. Martinez asked what the hours would be. Ms. Moore said there is some lighting to the north of the turf area and added that unless there were problems with noise and/or unacceptable activity the dog park would probably remain open with the park from sunrise until 10 p.m.

Mark Yarbrough asked if there were any plans for the area to the west of the entry drive where the open grass is that is used for soccer. Ms. Moore said that eventually staff could expand into the dirt areas east of the entry drive, but not beyond that. She added that there was a proposal for a cell tower to be constructed in the area also, although construction was not started on that tower yet.

Marilyn Wilson asked if the Foundation was interested in expending any of their funds for this. Ms. Moore said they had raised about \$6,000 towards construction of a dog park and could add amenities to this if approved.

Don Goodrum noted there was about \$30,000 available for this project and asked if there were other uses for the funds that had been considered. Ms. Moore said the funding had been slated for replacement playground equipment at Princess Park but that the design process wasn't able to be completed this year.

Mr. Martinez asked if the \$30,000 was a one-time expenditure and whether continued maintenance would be consumed by the existing maintenance done at the park. Ms. Moore confirmed this and added that \$20,000 would be for fencing and the other \$10,000 for site amenities.

Mr. Goodrum recalled that when this issue was addressed previously there had been some opposition due to some things that were called for in the long range plan for the opposite side of the entry drive. He asked if staff was considering touching anything in that area. Ms. Moore said plans called for a community center and a library and that the potential still exists for those items if funding ever becomes available. Ms. Moore added that another comment received had been concern about people who walk the perimeter of the park for exercise. She said that staff will leave a buffer between the dog park fencing and the sidewalk to the east for that reason.

Mr. Martinez clarified that the dog park could expand into the dirt area shown. Ms. Moore said it could even be an expansion of the parking lot or other types of uses.

Mr. Fort asked if the fence would be an 8' fence. Ms. Moore said it would be a 6' fence planned now with 5' between the active and timid areas.

## **Public Comments**

No comments received.

Mr. Martinez asked for a motion on staff's recommendation. Mr. Yarbrough motioned to approve staff's recommendation to proceed with the creation of a dog park at Countryside Park, Mr. Goodrum seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

There being no further business, Mr. Martinez asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Wilson made a motion, Mr. Fort seconded, and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marc Heirshberg, CPRP  
PRCF Director